

REMARKS

Claims 18-34 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 18, 29 and 34 are amended for clarity. No new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representatives during the January 7, 2008 telephone interview. The substance of the telephone interview is incorporated into the remarks below.

The Office Action rejects claims 18-34 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Murata (U.S. Patent No. 6,445,833). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In particular, as discussed during the telephone interview, Applicants assert that Murata does not disclose or suggest at least a calculating step of calculating Z-values of each pixel based on image data for that pixel, and an adjusting step of adjusting a Z-value of a target pixel obtained in the calculating step using a Z-value of at least one individual pixel other than the target pixel, as recited in independent claim 18, and similarly recited in independent claims 29 and 34.

Murata discloses an image conversion apparatus that converts two-dimensional images into three-dimensional images by calculating parallax information for generating images for the right and left eyes based on perspective image characteristic value, such as luminance, contrast and choroma of each pixel in each field. However, Murata merely discloses that depth information is calculated for each parallax calculation region E1-E12, which includes a plurality of pixels. See Figs. 2 and 22. Therefore, Murata does not disclose that depth information of each pixel is calculated based on a perspective image characteristic value for that pixel.

Further, Murata discloses that a correction processing corrects each calculated depth information. However, this process is also performed on each parallax calculation region.

See column 22, lines 19-33 and Figs. 15-17. Thus, Murata does not disclose that correction processing uses depth information of an individual pixel and further that each depth information is corrected based on some depth information other than the corrected depth information.

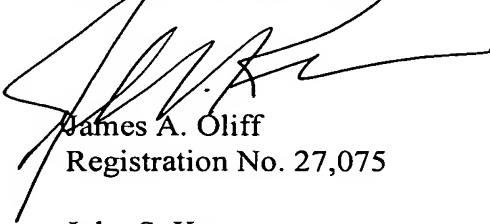
Thus, Applicants assert that Murata does not disclose or suggest at least a calculating step of calculating Z-values of each pixel based on image data for that pixel, and an adjusting step of adjusting a Z-value of a target pixel obtained in the calculating step using a Z-value of at least one individual pixel other than the target pixel, as recited in independent claim 18, and similarly recited in independent claims 29 and 34.

Therefore, independent claims 18, 29 and 34 define patentable subject matter. Claims 19-28 and 30-33 depend from the independent claims 18 and 29, respectively, and therefore also define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 18-34 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 18-34 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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